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AMERICAN ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

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THE DEFEAT OF THE GERMAN ARMY BILL.

Reforms have their ebbs as well as their flows. We are not disposed to estimate at more than its value the defeat of the army bill in the German Reichstag on the 6th of May. It is certainly possible for this action to be reversed by the new Parliament to be elected on the 15th of the present month. At all events, this action of the Reichstag will not put an immediate end to the evils and burdens of militarism in that country. Though these ought to be ended at once, they are certain to continue for a good while to come. A system as extended and deeply rooted as old-world militarism can not be torn out by the roots at one effort. It will take a good deal more patient digging and the further expenditure of a large quantity of moral dynamite before the uprooting is finished.

But this defeat is none the less a very significant one. It marks an important stage in the growing opposition to the further development of European armaments and the increasing desire for the abandonment of the present military methods in favor of something more reasonable. It is doubly significant as occurring in Germany which has been supposed to be the most intensely military of any of the countries of Europe. It proves that many of the most patriotic and intelligent men of the empire are not alarmed at the fact that the French standing army is greater than their own. The most persistent and threatening efforts of the Emperor and the Chancellor to frighten them with the bugbear of French revenge have proved unavailing. They are willing to trust the safety of their fatherland to better counsels and a more reasonable policy. The leaders of the movement which defeated the bill, Barth, Baumbach, Bebel, etc., have met and counselled with French deputies and senators, and they know very well that the asserted desire for revenge on the part of the French people has been greatly exaggerated.

The opposition which led to this defeat was not a temporary one growing out of momentary excitement or indignation at the young Emperor's imperious folly. He probably has himself to thank for the immediate defeat of his plan for the re-organization and increase of the army. He became impatient of further concessions and delay and forced the bill to its death. It has since been reported that if the new Reichstag should refuse to pass the measure he would take the matter into his own hands and increase the army at his own pleasure. But now it is said that he has become conciliatory and promises not to override the will of the deputies. He will sooner or later become convinced that he must submit and acquiesce

in this opposition to further military development. Whatever concessions may be made and however conciliatory he may become in order to carry his point, the conscience and intelligence of the German people have become thoroughly aroused, and the opposition which has widened and deepened during the last few months will gather strength until it goes beyond all new bills and attacks the present army system in its old strongholds.

The defeat which militarism received on the 6th of May will encourage the friends of peace and arbitration in Germany and all other countries and unite them in a still more earnest effort to overthrow the barbarous and cruel system which distresses and is sapping the strength of all Europe. We shall hope that the new Reichstag will be still stronger in opposition to the scheme of the Emperor and the Chancellor than the late one. The struggle in the approaching election will be a bitter one. The momentous question has now for the first time been thrown fairly and fully before the German voters. The old and the new will struggle each for the mastery. The election campaign will be a very educational one. We can scarcely forecast from this distance what the result will be, but of one thing we are sure and that is that the new movement, even if it should meet with a temporary check, will increase in strength and volume until it finally dares to raise questions which will make the ears of militarism tingle.

THE SUPREME COURT AND THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT.

The Chinese Exclusion Act was promptly brought before the Supreme Court of the United States, as was expected. Arguments were heard from Joseph H. Choate of New York, in behalf of the Chinese, and from Charles H. Aldrich, solicitor-general, in behalf of the United States. On Monday, May 15th, the Supreme Court gave its decision confirming the constitutionality of the Act. The decision was, for want of time to put it in writing, verbally given by Justice Gray on behalf of himself, Justices Blatchford, Brown, Shiras and Jackson. Chief Justice Fuller, Justices Field and Brewer dissented from the opinion of the majority of the Court, the two latter declaring in strong terms not only the unconstitutionality of the Act, but also its inhumanity and its menace to the constitutional liberties of the people. A motion for a rehearing of the case by the full bench of the Court, Justice Harlan being away, was not granted.

This decision of the Supreme Court was a surprise to nearly everybody. Opinion has of late been rapidly awaking against the infamous Geary act, and it was generally hoped and expected that the law would find its death blow in the highest tribunal of the land. This decision of the Court must not be taken, however, as proof that the five Justices who united in making it be-